

# FSA NEWS

## **February 2008**

**Fallon County FSA Office**  
**P.O. Box 1516**  
**Baker, Montana 59313**  
**PH: (406) 778-2238**  
**Fax: (406) 778-2965**

### **County Committee Members**

Robert Wenz, Chair  
Brian Rustad, Vice-Chair  
Maralee Burdick, Regular Member

### **FSA Office Personnel**

Maria L. Braun, CED - Ext. 102  
Kay Varner, PT - Ext. 104  
Sonja Wiseman, PT - Ext. 100  
Ray Allerdings, Field - Ext. 108  
Sharon Gookin - Temp. - Ext. 107  
Robin Markuson - Farm Loan Officer  
(406) 775-6359 Ext. 110

### **Dates to Remember:**

**February 18:** Office Closed – President's Day

**March 13:** COC meeting at 1:00 at FSA office

**March 15:** Deadline to purchase coverage for 2008 NAP crops – Contact the office with any questions

**March 15:** Sales closing date for MPC I on spring seeded crops. See your local insurance agent.

**March 31:** Final loan/LDP availability date for various crops harvested in 2007

**April 1:** Deadline for payment limitation changes

**April 15:** Acreage reporting date for producers with the Group Risk Program (GRP) for grazing

**May 1:** Pull off date for livestock from NAP forage acres. Check with your Agent for MPC I pull off date for insurance forages.

**May 15 – August 1:** Primary nesting period season on CRP acres under the new provisions

**FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup> – DON'T FORGET YOUR VALENTINE!!!**



## **Signup Still Underway for Disaster Assistance Programs**

Signup continues for the Livestock Compensation Program (LCP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and the Crop Disaster Program (CDP). Producers in primary counties declared secretarial disaster areas or certain counties declared presidential disaster areas between January 1, 2005 and February 28, 2007 or producers located in counties contiguous to those counties are eligible. CDP does not require a disaster declaration. Fallon County has half of the livestock producers that **have not** been into the office to report their grazing losses. Letters were sent to each livestock producer in October and program reminders have been published in the last four (4) newsletters.

Please contact the office for further explanation of the programs or to make an appointment to discuss eligibility.

## **Census of Agriculture Coming Soon**

Beginning December 28, 2007, the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) mailed out Census of Agriculture forms to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. NASS encourages producers to complete the forms by **February 4, 2008**, however NASS will accept forms after that deadline. Please contact NASS to file an extension if you are returning the forms after February 4th. Forms may be returned by mail or, for the first time, forms may be filled out online via a secure web site.

Conducted every five years by USDA, the Census is a complete count of the nation's farm and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics. The Census provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation.

For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, contact the NASS Montana Field Office at 406/441-1240 or 1-800-835-2612 or logon to the Montana Agriculture Statistics website at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>

## **FSA Website**

Producers may access FSA information and forms on the Montana Internet site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>

## 2008 LDP Application Reminder to Wool and Mohair Producers

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008:

- was signed by the President on December 26, 2007
- authorizes MAL and LDP programs for 2008 crops of graded and ungraded wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts through March 15, 2008. 8-LP, Part 15 provides MAL and LDP policy and procedures for wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts. Accepting 2008 crop year MAL and LDP requests for commodities other than wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts is prohibited. **Unshorn pelts are eligible for LDP only.** County offices can accept and process 2008 crop wool, mohair, and unshorn pelt MAL and LDP requests through March 15, 2008

Because March 15, 2008, falls on a Saturday, 2008 crop wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts requests must be postmarked or fax date stamped on or before March 15, 2008. **Beneficial Interest Exception:** If wool, mohair, and unshorn pelt producers have lost beneficial interest **before** issuance of this notice in the 2008 crop wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts, County Offices shall use the LDP rate in effect on the date beneficial interest was considered lost. **Note:** The 2008 crop year wool and mohair loan rates will remain unchanged from the 2007 crop loan rates.

### **Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Provisions Will Be Continued**

The 2002 Farm Bill implemented the AGI at \$2.5 million limited. Those provisions for AGI have been extended through March 15, 2008.

Until March 15, 2008, FSA county offices will:

- Accept AGI certifications as necessary for crop years 2003 through 2007;
- Obtain AGI certifications for 2008 for emergency, disaster, and conservation program purposes.

Each program has an established payment limitation that applies to all farming operations. Details for each program's payment limitation may be obtained at the county office. Further information will be provided as it is received regarding updated AGI provisions.

### **1099-G Mailed from Kansas City**

During the last week of January, producers who have received payments from FSA should have also received a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to you in calendar year 2007. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you received a CCC-1099-G, we recommend that you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with eAuthentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact the county office for assistance locating the correct payment data. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G with you.

Step-by-step instructions for obtaining a Level 2 access to obtain your CCC-1099-G electronically are available on the Montana Internet site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt> under the "I Want To" section and by clicking on the "Do Electronic Business with FSA on My Home Computer."

### **Farm Storage Facility Loans**

Low cost loans for storage facilities are available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, rice, soybeans and corn. The interest rate changes each month.

Farm storage facility loans are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional-type cribs or bins and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85 percent of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000.

## **FSA Hiring a Summer Intern**

If you know a college student who is interested in agriculture issues in Montana and wants to work for the Farm Service Agency (FSA), now is the time for them to apply for a job. FSA in Montana is providing students the opportunity to learn more about the Farm Service Agency as a full-time career through the summer intern program.

The Montana vacancy announcement for one summer intern position will close March 14, 2008.

The position is open to any student who:

- Is a U.S. citizen;
- Is currently enrolled in a college or university; and
- Is planning to continue their education in the fall of 2008.

For the vacancy announcement logon to the Montana FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.uda.gov/mt> or by contacting Linda Itoh at 406/587-6876.

FSA will also be hiring a Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) position. SCEP is an internship program that allows a student part-time employment with FSA while they are completing their college education. The goal of the program is for the student to work for FSA at the completion of their degree.

For further information or an application packet logon to the Montana FSA website or call Linda Itoh at 406/587-6876 or Dave Pitts at 406/587-6787.

## **Demand for Organic Crops Provides Opportunity when CRP Contracts End**

Montana is experiencing increasing demand for organic grain to supply markets for organic flour and other certified organic food ingredients, according to the Montana Department of Agriculture.

This creates an additional option for growers whose Conservation Reserve Program contracts will expire within the next few years. CRP contracts for an estimated 907,000 acres in Montana will expire in 2008 to 2010.

Fields that have been in CRP and have not been treated with herbicides during the past three years may be eligible for organic certification without a three-year transition period from conventional crops. Organic certification is among the ways farmers and ranchers can add value to commodities. Prices offered for organic crops may be twice those of non-organic crops.

For information on the requirements for organic certification, contact Doug Crabtree at the Montana Department of Agriculture at (406) 444-9421 or at [dcrabtree@mt.gov](mailto:dcrabtree@mt.gov).

## **NAP DEADLINE FOR 2008 – MARCH 15**

**DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE NAP DEADLINE FOR Non-insured Assistance Program is – MARCH 15, 2008.** NAP provides financial assistance to producers of Noninsurable crops when low yields occur as a result of natural disaster. Eligible crops are those commercially produced for food, livestock consumption, and some specialty crops. Eligible producers must pay an administrative service fee of \$100 per crop per administrative county or \$300 per producer per county, not to exceed \$900 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Service fees may be waived for limited-resource producers. **Payment of a service fee does not guarantee coverage.** There are many eligibility requirements that must be met. ***The Application Closing Date for all crops except value loss and honey is March 15, 2008.*** Contact the office for further information.

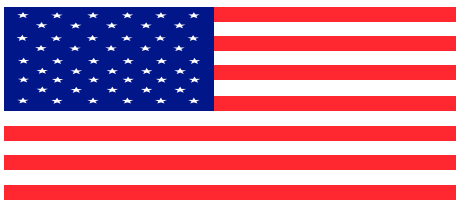
## **NAP Pull Off**

Each FSA County Committee determines the date when livestock must be removed from NAP forage acres each spring. The date determined in Fallon County is May 1, 2008. The pull off date for crops intended for grass seed is April 1 in all counties.

**Also, remember the deadline for Multi-peril crop insurance spring-seeded crop is also March 15. Insurance is now available for feed type barley varieties that are harvested for seed/grain, please check with your insurance agent for information.**

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### **Montana Range Days**

Join the fun during the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Montana Range Days being held June 16-18, 2008 at Utterback Middle School in Conrad. Participants will spend three full days exploring the Rocky Mountain Front while learning about natural resources. 2008 Montana Range Days is sponsored by the Pondera Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Northern Ag Network.

For complete details and a registration form, logon to [www.montanarangedays.com](http://www.montanarangedays.com) or contact Kody Farkell at 406/278-7611 extension 101 or [kody.farkell@mt.nacdnet.net](mailto:kody.farkell@mt.nacdnet.net).

### **Montana Envirothon**

The Montana Envirothon will be held April 28-29, 2008 in Lewistown. The Envirothon assists high school age students learn more about five different natural resource areas. This program is sponsored by the Montana Association of Conservation Districts and cooperating agencies. Five-member teams made up of students from the same school enrolled in grades 9-12 compete locally and regionally with the winning team advancing to the state competition. Sponsorship is available through your local conservation district. For more information logon to the Montana Department of Natural Resources website at <http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/camps> or by calling 406/444-6667.

### **Year End Reviews**

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are urged to keep current production and income/expense records. These records are essential in making informed management decisions for your farming operation. Your local Farm Loan Manager or Farm Loan Officer will be requesting copies of your records on an annual or bi-annual basis and the information is used to complete a Year-End Analysis (YEA) for your operation. The frequency of the review is based on the type of loan you received and the terms of your agreement with FSA.

### **Change in Farming Operation or Address**

Producers are reminded to notify this office to report change in address or ownership. This may include land sales, entity changes, or other changes to your farming operation. This is vital to assist this office in keeping up-to-date records and producers eligibility in the various programs.